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# REVIEWS OF BOOKS.

*Die Philosophie des jungen Leibniz. Untersuchungen zur Entwicklungsgeschichte seines Systems.* Von WILLY KABITZ, Privatdozent an der Universität Breslau. Heidelberg, Carl Winter's Universitätsbuchhandlung. 1909. — pp. viii, 159.

Since the beginning of the publication of Leibniz's posthumous writings, interest in the Leibnizian philosophy has steadily increased. Within the last few years a number of important books have been written by scholars of different nations, offering new interpretations of the system in the light of the later material. Each new student has tended to exaggerate some phase of the teaching, and has sought to explain the other phases from the standpoint of what seemed to him the key-note of the whole. Russell and Couturat have pushed Leibniz's logic into the center of the system, and have tried to show that his metaphysical doctrines follow necessarily from the premises of his logic; while Cassierer treats the great monadologist as a kind of connecting link between Descartes and Kant, finding in him, or rather reading into him, the germs of the later criticism. Dr. Kabitz, the author of the book before us, though frankly acknowledging the great merits of these contributions, does not believe that a proper understanding of the system can be reached in that way alone. His own method is a much more satisfactory one, one much more likely to give us a true insight into the philosophy as a whole, than the one-sided treatment already spoken of. He approaches his task from the historical side; his ideal is to trace the evolution of the system through the published and unpublished material at hand, in short, to describe the birth and growth of the system. This is not an easy thing to do, and the author thoroughly appreciates the difficulties of the undertaking, being well aware that it can be accomplished only gradually. The source-material at our disposal is still incomplete and not always trustworthy. The dates of many important manuscripts have not been definitely fixed or even determined at all. The present book therefore confines itself to the examination of the writings of Leibniz's youth, of the 'first phase' of his thought, down to his sojourn in Paris. The discovery of the infinitesimal calculus brings about a significant advance over Leibniz's earlier position, while a profounder study of Descartes and contact with thinkers like Huygens, Malebranche, and Spinoza, form contributing causes of development. At the same time, Dr. Kabitz finds, the leading principles of the later system, the basal conceptions and the main lines of growth, are already established in the first period; during the later stage Leibniz simply acquired new means for solving his problems in a more complete manner.

The beginning made by Dr. Kabitz is a good beginning; his work gives evidence of careful scholarship and inspires one with confidence in its results. In the five chapters, discussing Metaphysic, Mathematics, and Logic as the Foundation of the System of Sciences (pp. 4–48), Natural Philosophy (pp. 49–80), Mental Philosophy (pp. 81–94), Practical Philosophy (pp. 95–109), and Theology (pp. 110–126), he examines the writings of Leibniz down to 1672, using many hitherto unpublished manuscripts, as well as some of the sources from which the philosopher drew. In the very first metaphysical work, *De principio individui* (1663), a principle of the later system already appears: the Aristotelian-nominalistic proposition that only individual substances exist; it is the traditional metaphysical standpoint of the Protestant schoolmen, which was handed down to Leibniz by his teachers. He was an individualist or pluralist from the start, and never gave up the theory of individual substances. A decisive change takes place in his views in the years 1664–1666, and is expressed in the *Ars combinatoria*. He becomes acquainted with Pythagorean-Platonic and natural-scientific conceptions, and these bring conflicts into his thinking which it takes him a long time to overcome. His teacher, Weigel, convinced him of what became and remained a basal notion of his system, that the universe is a harmonious, mathematical-logical, unified whole; that metaphysics and mathematics are the fundamental sciences, and the deductive method the true method of knowledge. Leibniz also becomes aware of the importance of the principle of sufficient reason, and makes it the basis of his physics, ethics, and theology. From the very beginning it had not only a logical but metaphysical-cosmological meaning for him. It is not true, therefore, as Couturat asserts, that Leibniz's metaphysics rests solely upon the principles of his logic and grows out of these. The history of his development shows the reverse: Leibniz's logic rests upon metaphysical presuppositions and is shot through with metaphysics.

Alongside of the rationalistic tendencies which we have noticed in the foregoing, we also find in Leibniz a marked empiricism that follows from his nominalism. Indeed, all through the writings of his earlier period we discover an irreconcilable antagonism between his rationalism and his sensationalism, — a proof that he did not at that time grasp the full meaning of the epistemological problems. It was not until the influence of Descartes had made itself more deeply felt that he studied the question more thoroughly and brought the different parts of his theory of knowledge into harmony with each other.

In his earliest published work Leibniz accepted the traditional scholastic view of nature which had been taught him at the university. A few years later, however, we find him greatly interested in the newer atomistic-mechanical conceptions. But down to 1669 we note no progress in his views; he wavers between the different standpoints, frequently shifts his ground, and is inclined to compromise. The mechanical theory appeals to him, and yet he is not willing to conceive mind as a mere accident of matter. In an unpublished fragment of 1670 we mark a decisive change; the notions of extension, space, time, body, motion, and figure are brought under the arithmetical notion of quantity (the notion of a whole composed of parts): extension being conceived as quantity whose parts are assumed as existing, number as quantity whose parts are not assumed as existing. Leibniz here already possesses the notions of *conatus*, *punctum*, and *instans*, which he places at the head of his *Theoria motus* (1671). These concepts he takes over from Hobbes, who had defined *conatus* as motion occurring in the smallest possible space and in the shortest possible time; but he modifies them in accordance with his metaphysical conception of reality. For him they are inextended and indivisible elements, real parts in the continuum, — real infinite parts. This new conception is not merely an epistemological notion, but a metaphysical solution of the problem of the continuum. *Conatus*, *punctum*, and *instans* are metaphysical realities, *conatus* being tacitly conceived as a kind of will-impulse. Here we are on the road to the later teaching of Leibniz. From here there is only a step to the larger letter to Arnauld (1671), in which the essence of the body is conceived as motion. If this is so, and the principle of motion is extended, then the body is in principle inextended. Body as such therefore is not a substance but an accident. Leibniz has here reached a wholly kinetic theory of matter.

As the chief merit of his new theory of motion Leibniz regarded the fact that it compelled the assumption of mental beings, and that it furnished proofs of almost geometrical certainty of the immortality of the soul and the existence of God. The most important question for him had always been the substantiality of the soul. He reaches the conclusion that psychical realities are the basal elements of the body and of motion. Mathematics with metaphysics and logic now form the basis of the sciences, and theology the apex; whereas down to 1669 the order had been: metaphysics or theology, moral philosophy, mathematics, physics. We see here the influence of Hobbes. Leibniz now plans (1671) a system of mental sciences with mathematics and natural science as its basis. In the writings of 1671 the mind is localized in an inextended point in space. The *conatus* is the basal element of consciousness; the operations of consciousness consist in tendencies, as those of the body consist in movements. Just as there is no absolute rest in bodies, there is no rest in the mind; consciousness is in a state of constant activity. Corresponding to the manifold movements of the body we have manifold tendencies in the mind. The mind or consciousness is a harmony of tendencies, and pleasure a feeling of harmony. The substantiality of the soul consists solely in the unity of its functions, and from consciousness as such follows its individual character.

As Dr. Kabitz points out in a concluding section of his book, Leibniz's earlier world-view contains a number of characteristic basal ideas, which are as yet, in many respects, loose, disjointed, and undeveloped, and which he develops, elaborates, and systematizes in his later period. His originality largely consists in the way in which he accomplishes this task. A central thought is the idea of the complete rationality of the universe, the logical law of ground and the law of causality being combined into a cosmological law. This notion determines the thinker's general problem as well as his method; it also settles the question of the relation of logic and metaphysics in the system from the very start. The two sciences develop in interdependence; the threads run back and forth between them; for which reason it is impracticable to treat them in complete separation from each other. To make the matter still more complicated, mathematics also exercises an influence upon the development of logic and metaphysics.

Another basal notion of the system is that of the independent value of the individual in the universe, a view which Leibniz took over from his scholastic days and never surrendered. It constitutes an argument for the existence of God: only a teleological or rational cause can explain the presence of individual objects in the world; indeed those must already be contained in the rational world-ground as the idea or motive or goal of his creative will. A later thought grows out of this: owing to its origin in the divine mind, every individual carries within itself its own destiny and law. Leibniz's conception of the value and reality of the individual and particular affects his logic and theory of knowledge even in the period of his youth, bringing it into conflict with his rationalistic presuppositions.

Closely connected with the individualistic conception is the notion of the perfect harmony of all things, a harmony which is grounded in the divine reason itself. It is the absolute standard for the divine will in its choice among possible worlds ; it is the principle by which the value of the individual is measured ; it is the principle of all purposes, or the end in itself, of the world reason. It is the conception which appears in the later system as the principle of preëstablished harmony.

Another thought is the thought of the quantitative and qualitative infinity of the universe. The mechanical hypothesis is also a fundamental and permanent factor in the world-view of Leibniz ; but it is limited to the corporeal world and subordinated to the principle of purpose and harmony.

The book is a valuable contribution to the literature of Leibniz, and a good example of the historical-critical method. The only safe way to discover how Leibniz came to develop his particular system is to study the documents in which he expressed his thoughts. It is easier to make guesses and to formulate all kinds of theories about it than to work it out patiently from the original sources ; and we are indebted to Dr. Kabitz for having chosen the more fruitful, though more difficult, path.

The appendix contains a number of hitherto unpublished manuscripts.

FRANK THILLY.

CORNELL UNIVERSITY.

*The Philosophy of Kant Explained.* By JOHN WATSON. Glasgow, James Maclehose & Sons, 1908. — pp. xi, 515.

Professor Watson has already earned the gratitude of all English students of Kant by his translations from the three "Critiques." More accurate and readable renderings cannot well be demanded of Kant's cumbersome German. They are invariably a quite masterly statement of his intended meaning. If Dr. Watson could be prevailed upon to undertake complete translations of Kant's chief works, they would be assured of a most eager welcome.

The purpose of this present volume may best be stated in the author's own words. "This book is the result of a not unsuccessful experiment in the art of teaching continued over many years, the main object of which was to provide a method by which the tendency of the student to lean upon the authority of his teacher could be counteracted. Nothing can well be more fatal to any real progress in philos-